

## BABY'S "ROTIME SONG."

Sway to and fro to the twilight gray,  
This is the ferry for Shadowtown;  
It always sails at the end of day,  
Just as the darkness is closing down.

Rest, little head, on my shoulder, so,  
A sleepy kiss is the only fare,  
Drifting away from the world we go,  
Baby and I in a rocking chair.

See, where the fire-lights glow and spark,  
Glimmer the lights of Shadowland;  
The peeling elms on the window, hark!  
Are rippling, rapping upon its strand.

There where the mirror is gleaming dim,  
A halo with its shimmering cool and still;  
Flowers are waving above its brim,  
Those over there on the window sill.

Rock slow, more slow, in the dusky light,  
Silently lower the anchor down;  
Dear little passenger, say good night,  
We've reached the harbor of Shadowtown.

—Frederick Wynn.

## MY JOURNEY TO TEXAS.

FORT LINCOLN, SANKATA, VEGAS COUNTY, TEX.

April 2, 1889.—Dear Elsie: I ventured to suggest a year ago to our respected sister, Lavinia, that it would do you no harm, and some others a great deal of good, if you spent a summer with me. You remember the answer? "You were delicate, Texas was the land of chills, and I was not a fit person to be guardian of so irresponsible a subject as my small but overbearing sister. What you wished did not appear, and it was too late, so my plans were ruthlessly crushed and Lavinia triumphed. This time I write to you, not Lavinia. You are 19, my dear, and if an American woman is ever going to have her own way she begins at 19. Will you come this year? And will you come at once? The wide world is waiting for you, and as for the boy, to see "Aunt Elsie" is the dearest wish of his heart. I do not expect a favorable reply. I have too much respect for the power of Lavinia's will and authority. Yet this letter shall go. Your loving brother,

ADRIAN WYNN.

P. S.—If you can defy the powers that be, write at once, so that I may meet you at Sankata. The cars will carry you there. I will come as far as Hobart Junction if I can. Are you afraid of the journey?

A. W.

Would I go? Of course I would. Did the foolish boy think there was only one will in the family? The dear old fellow, if he really wanted his useless, frivolous minded little sister, he should certainly have her. Lavinia was shocked at the idea, of course, but it was of no use. I said I must go, and went.

I sent word, as I was told, the next day, and two weeks later I was rolling out of Chicago in a sleeper of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy railway, speeding westwards, fairly embarked upon a journey of five days and five nights on the cars and a thirty mile drive to Sankata.

How I was watched and cared for and waited upon by the railway officials. Conductors of trains have faults, I suppose, but they were very good to me. They got my tickets; they told me where to change; they brought me coffee; and until I got to Hobart Junction, where I hoped to find Addison, I might have been—really was—surrounded by an army of protectors and friends. I looked anxiously up and down the platform at Hobart, but, alas! no Addison was to be seen.

Well, I had come more than 1,000 miles alone. Assuredly I was capable of conveying myself fifty, and he would not fail to meet me. So there was nothing to worry about. Nevertheless, when I found that there was only one day car going on from Hobart, that I was to be the only woman on board, and that the pace at which we were to travel would not be more than ten miles an hour, because the track was unsafe, my heart sank a little. I confess, for it was 2 o'clock in the morning, and I was very tired. There was a change of conductors, too—a change for the worse. The "boss" of this train was a large, roughly dressed person, with a hairy face, who stared at me as he arranged my bags and wraps upon a seat in front in a way that was scarcely polite and not at all reassuring. When he had finished his work he growled out in a gruff voice:

"Going to Fort Lincoln this trip, I believe?" I replied with dignity that the commandant of the fort was my brother, and then, leaning back in my seat, closed my eyes and pretended to slumber. This hint was sufficient, and to my great joy, after another prolonged stare, the man went about his business. When I was quite sure of this I opened my eyes and looked about me. It was a very shabby car; badly furnished, badly lighted and badly ventilated; a smell of stale tobacco smoke about it, which made me feel quite sick. I became very cross and gloomy. Addison ought to have met me before this. He knew I was alone, and must be aware what an emigrant car was like. Perhaps this was a practical joke—he always liked practical jokes—and he hoped to frighten me. Well, he had not done that, at any rate. There was nothing to be frightened about.

The men in the car scarcely noticed me at all, and though my conductor was gruff, his face was not forbidding—and he knew Addison. Soothed by these thoughts I closed my eyes in good earnest and tried to sleep. I was accustomed to traveling now, and soon dropped into an uneasy doze and began to dream. I dreamed of a face I had not seen for a long, long while—the face of an old schoolfellow, Eric Proctor by name, who had gone out west some time ago, and was often mentioned by Addison in his letters. Eric was a nice boy before he went west, a clumsy, overgrown youth, but very amiable and good natured, with a great head of yellow hair, and simple, honest, blue eyes. I don't know why I dreamed of Eric now; perhaps it was because he was the only person I knew in Texas besides the family; but I did dream of him very vividly. I thought I had arrived at Sankata, and found him on the platform instead of Addison. He looked very much older than he used to do, his face haggard and worn.

He did not speak to me, but, taking my hand, led me away until we were out of sight of the station, and then lifted me onto a horse, which had appeared from I don't know where, and we were galloping away at a tremendous pace. I begged him to let me go, but he shook his head and spurred on faster. I began to feel cold and queer, as if he were made of ice and was freezing me. All at once he stopped with a sharp jerk, and with a cry flung me away, and I felt myself falling, falling as if from some great height—and awoke. The train was still. We had pulled up at a wayside station to water the engine, and I was shivering with the chill air. The dawn was at hand, and the slipper of the train and walked briskly up and down to warm myself, and by the time the sun was rising, and I began to recover my spirits.

At last a short, bluff whistle from the engine, like the bark of some giant dog, a movement among the passengers, and a jarring sensation beneath my feet. The goal of my desire was not far off. Now the door of the

train was open, and I saw a man, who had come from me all the journey, came in from the baggage van to take tickets. Mine was the last. He examined it with unnecessary deliberation, and then delivered himself of the following ominous remark:

"Now, say, why didn't ye write the colonel that yew were comin'?"

The familiarity of this address would have disgusted me at any ordinary time, but now I began to feel miserably anxious.

"I did write," I replied breathlessly.

"He will be at the station to meet me."

"He ain't!"

The rejoinder came as sharply as the ping of an arrow. I jumped up with a lump in my throat, and looked out of the window.

The train had stopped and most of the passengers were leaving it. There was no station or depot here, only a rough platform on one side of the line, with "Sankata" painted in types black letters on the rail, and a solitary log house a few yards away with "Post-office" in white letters on the door. Yet this was undoubtedly my destination, and the conductor was right—Addison had not come. There were several rough, red faced creatures lounging on the platform, wearing broad brimmed hats, great riding boots and prominent spurs; there were our passengers disappearing one by one into the log house in search of breakfast, but there was no Col. Wynn. What could have happened? I turned from the window with a gasp, and met the eyes of the conductor looking down upon me with the grimmest expression I had ever seen.

"Well," he said, with an exasperating interrogatory inflection on that expressive word.

"He cannot have received my letter," I observed, hurriedly, trying to keep my voice clear and steady, while the lump in my throat grew and grew, and I wanted to cry very badly indeed. To avert this catastrophe, I suggested that my belongings should be removed from the train. The conductor instantly became brisk and helpful, and we were soon passing by the red faced men, who drew back to give us room, and stared with great round, stupid eyes, as if they had never seen a girl in a gray ulster before. We went straight to the postoffice, and were met by the postmaster before we reached the door. He was a tall, dark man, with only one eye; a dreadfully ugly man, with a very dirty face and still dirtier hands—a wicked looking man, I thought. The conductor greeted him as if they were old acquaintances.

"Seen Col. Wynn lately, Hank?"

"A week ago—came for his mail."

"This is his sister."

Mr. Hank nodded as if he were aware of the fact, and stared very hard at me with his one eye.

"Is—my brother here?" I ventured to ask, just for something to say.

"He's at the fort, miss."

"And how far off is that?"

"Thirty mile—bee line."

My heart began to beat at a very uncomfortable rate. A horrible state of things!

"Would you kindly advise me what to do?"

"Breakfast," struck in the conductor decidedly. "You've eat nothing for ten hours."

"Thank you," I answered politely. "I am hungry; but I want to know how I am to get to Fort Lincoln."

This question was not to be answered at once. Neither of the men seemed to hear it, and without further ceremony ushered me into the house, through one long room full of men with a stove in the middle of it, a liquor bar, and several small tables, to a small room behind, where there were heaps of blankets scattered about a rough bedstead, one chair and a table.

"Sit down," said the postmaster, pointing to the chair. I obeyed, feeling very forlorn and helpless. It was a dreadful position to be in. There did not seem to be a woman anywhere. I was thirty miles from my brother, with no visible means of reaching him; and this dreadful one eyed man was master of the situation. A whispered colloquy, lasting several minutes, now took place between the postmaster and the conductor, after which the former, whose name I subsequently discovered to be Mr. Hank Wybrow, turned to me and cleared his throat as though he were about to address a camp meeting.

"There's but two things to be done, miss, as far as we kin see, and you must fix on which road suits ye best. Kunnel Wynn don't expect you, I reckon, so you'll have to hunt him, or send and git him to come for yew. I can't poke up much accommodation here, and there ain't a woman nearer to the fort just now; but if yew feel to stay I'll fix what I may to-night and send a boy to the kunnel. If this ain't good enough I'll see if any one is bound Fort Lincoln with a wagon to take ye there. Think it out, will ye? while I dish breakfast, and let me know your mind in an hour."

This was very fairly said. I thanked Mr. Wybrow for his offers and was able to bid farewell to the conductor, who had another ten miles to travel, with a stout heart.

It did not take me long to make up my mind. I cannot say that I relished the idea of a thirty mile drive with a stranger, but while breakfast was in course of preparation a little incident happened that made this difficulty seem a very small one. The room I was in was lighted by one square window not far from the ground, and after the postmaster had left the room I saw three pairs of eyes, belonging to the rough faces of some of the men I had seen on the platform, staring fixedly at me. They disappeared with great quickness when they saw that I was aware of their scrutiny; but the feeling of being watched was very unpleasant, and I felt that I would not pass a night at Sankata on any account.

Mr. Wybrow appeared relieved when I told him this, and when he brought up breakfast introduced a man who owned a wagon, and guaranteed to arrive at Fort Lincoln before sundown.

I can see the fellow now, though it is ten years since that day. A very thin man, of middle height, dressed in neat, brown canvas clothes. His hair was very smooth, parted in the middle and carried back behind his ears as tightly as if it were bound with rope. He had a small, round head, a flat nose, brown eyes, rather dull and expressionless, very high cheek bones and thick lips. An ugly man, yet quiet and modest in manner and speech, with a soft, well modulated voice. He was inclined to be bald, stooped in his gait, and seemed a rather stupid and altogether insignificant kind of a person. A "doctor of medicine," he called himself, and added with some dignity that he was a "friend of Col. Wynn's."

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relief after the harsh speech of Mr. Wybrow, and my one object in life just then was to get away from those horrible staring eyes. In less than an hour I was by his side jolting along the Fort Lincoln road behind a stout team of mules.

I cannot remember now how far we went before I began to feel nervous and uncomfortable. I know that it was a long way, for I remember congratulating myself upon having left Sankata, because my companion told me that the safe postmaster had been murdered by cowboys a week or two ago—and this was doubtless how my letter miscarried—and that the station was known to be one of the worst haunts for rowdies in the county. But the time came at length when he felt quite silent, and I then found that whenever I turned my head to view the prairie about us his eyes rested upon my face. Oh, how terrible it was! I edged away from him to the farthest corner of the seat, and felt more and more helpless and unnerved every moment. The suspense did not last long.

When he perceived my fears he boldly raised his eyes and looked at me with a smile of the most horrible kind. Then he laughed softly a dry, hard laugh. I tried to speak now, but my throat was dry and parched, and my tongue seemed paralyzed. He laughed again, louder, and, stopping quickly, pulled up the mules with a jerk. I knew what was coming now, and before he could touch me, sprang from the wagon. He followed me with the swift, silent movement of a snake, and as I turned to meet him, for I could not run, he laughed for the third time. The sound roused me. I tried to seize his throat with both hands. I felt that I could kill him for that laugh. But, oh! the weakness of a woman! Why are we not as strong as men? He caught my wrists in his hard, brown fingers. My arms were forced back, powerless and helpless, as if held in iron bands. I screamed now in good earnest and struggled against him with all my strength and soul, and all the time I felt his grip grow tighter and tighter. His muscles were of steel.

Suddenly he relaxed his hold and stood still, and his flushed face became colorless and livid, as if I had accomplished my desire and he was dying. Then he let me go, starting from me as if I were some poisonous thing; and, dropping on his knees, he bent his head to the ground and listened. When he rose to his feet a moment later he reeled and staggered like a drunken man, looking at me wildly with the expression of some hunted beast of prey. I stared at him dumfounded for a moment, feeling very giddy and sick, and then I knew what he had heard. We were in a hollow between two rolls of prairie, and could not see far on either side, but sound carries a long way in this country, and even my unaccustomed ears now caught a low, rumbling thunder, becoming louder every instant—the flying hoofs of galloping horses. It came from behind; some one had followed us. Whoever it might be, the wretched man who had betrayed his trust was likely to get short shift. He knew it well, and now threw himself on his knees at my feet, muttering in hoarse whisper:

"Come back to the wagon. They'll murder me in cold blood else, before your eyes. I swear I was only fooling. I had not a wrong thought in my heart. Save me, save me!"

I was willing to do that, much as I loathed the creature, for he had not hurt me; but I could not go back to the wagon. I began to feel very faint and queer; the sensation of safety, after the horrible tension a minute ago, was a severe reaction, and almost too much for me. The poor wretch saw this, and his muttered supplication rose to a bitter cry.

"They are cowboys; they've heard your call. They'll tear me in pieces if you drop. Don't! Oh, my God! my God!"

I set my teeth hard. I would not yield to my weakness. Bad as his intentions were, I could not let him be killed. With a great effort I managed somehow to keep my head steady, and then my rescuers swept over the hill, and the danger was over.

Twelve mounted men were there, riding at a tearing gallop, with free bridle rein. They gave a tremendous shout when they saw us, and there was a great flash of steel and silver, as twelve revolvers sprang from sheaths and were cocked and made ready for use. The poor wretch at my feet buried his face in his hands and crouched in terror, and I felt very nervous indeed, for these cowboys looked dreadfully fierce. On they came, silent now; many of them with bare knives between their teeth. No wonder this guilty creature was in despair. I went forward to meet them, and was about to speak, when a hat waved wildly, a hearty voice greeted me and I saw a face that I knew. It was Eric's, pale and stern, as I had seen it in my dream, but handsome, very much handsomer; and in another instant he was off his horse and shaking both my hands until my fingers positively ached. I was in safe keeping now indeed!

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I trusted him. His quiet voice was a

relief after the harsh speech of Mr. Wybrow, and my one object in life just then was to get away from those horrible staring eyes. In less than an hour I was by his side jolting along the Fort Lincoln road behind a stout team of mules.

I cannot remember now how far we went before I began to feel nervous and uncomfortable. I know that it was a long way, for I remember congratulating myself upon having left Sankata, because my companion told me that the safe postmaster had been murdered by cowboys a week or two ago—and this was doubtless how my letter miscarried—and that the station was known to be one of the worst haunts for rowdies in the county. But the time came at length when he felt quite silent, and I then found that whenever I turned my head to view the prairie about us his eyes rested upon my face. Oh, how terrible it was! I edged away from him to the farthest corner of the seat, and felt more and more helpless and unnerved every moment. The suspense did not last long.

When he perceived my fears he boldly raised his eyes and looked at me with a smile of the most horrible kind. Then he laughed softly a dry, hard laugh. I tried to speak now, but my throat was dry and parched, and my tongue seemed paralyzed. He laughed again, louder, and, stopping quickly, pulled up the mules with a jerk. I knew what was coming now, and before he could touch me, sprang from the wagon. He followed me with the swift, silent movement of a snake, and as I turned to meet him, for I could not run, he laughed for the third time. The sound roused me. I tried to seize his throat with both hands. I felt that I could kill him for that laugh. But, oh! the weakness of a woman! Why are we not as strong as men? He caught my wrists in his hard, brown fingers. My arms were forced back, powerless and helpless, as if held in iron bands. I screamed now in good earnest and struggled against him with all my strength and soul, and all the time I felt his grip grow tighter and tighter. His muscles were of steel.

Suddenly he relaxed his hold and stood still, and his flushed face became colorless and livid, as if I had accomplished my desire and he was dying. Then he let me go, starting from me as if I were some poisonous thing; and, dropping on his knees, he bent his head to the ground and listened. When he rose to his feet a moment later he reeled and staggered like a drunken man, looking at me wildly with the expression of some hunted beast of prey. I stared at him dumfounded for a moment, feeling very giddy and sick, and then I knew what he had heard. We were in a hollow between two rolls of prairie, and could not see far on either side, but sound carries a long way in this country, and even my unaccustomed ears now caught a low, rumbling thunder, becoming louder every instant—the flying hoofs of galloping horses. It came from behind; some one had followed us. Whoever it might be, the wretched man who had betrayed his trust was likely to get short shift. He knew it well, and now threw himself on his knees at my feet, muttering in hoarse whisper:

"Come back to the wagon. They'll murder me in cold blood else, before your eyes. I swear I was only fooling. I had not a wrong thought in my heart. Save me, save me!"

I was willing to do that, much as I loathed the creature, for he had not hurt me; but I could not go back to the wagon. I began to feel very faint and queer; the sensation of safety, after the horrible tension a minute ago, was a severe reaction, and almost too much for me. The poor wretch saw this, and his muttered supplication rose to a bitter cry.

"They are cowboys; they've heard your call. They'll tear me in pieces if you drop. Don't! Oh, my God! my God!"

I set my teeth hard. I would not yield to my weakness. Bad as his intentions were, I could not let him be killed. With a great effort I managed somehow to keep my head steady, and then my rescuers swept over the hill, and the danger was over.

Twelve mounted men were there, riding at a tearing gallop, with free bridle rein. They gave a tremendous shout when they saw us, and there was a great flash of steel and silver, as twelve revolvers sprang from sheaths and were cocked and made ready for use. The poor wretch at my feet buried his face in his hands and crouched in terror, and I felt very nervous indeed, for these cowboys looked dreadfully fierce. On they came, silent now; many of them with bare knives between their teeth. No wonder this guilty creature was in despair. I went forward to meet them, and was about to speak, when a hat waved wildly, a hearty voice greeted me and I saw a face that I knew. It